

EXHIBIT B

NEWS

Gingerbread Guinness World Record breaker Jon Lovitch bakes year-round at Forest Hills home



Jon Lovitch works year-round on his gingerbread houses, putting in as many as 100 hours per week before the holiday season. Photo Credit: Jeff Bachner

By Lisa L. Colangelo

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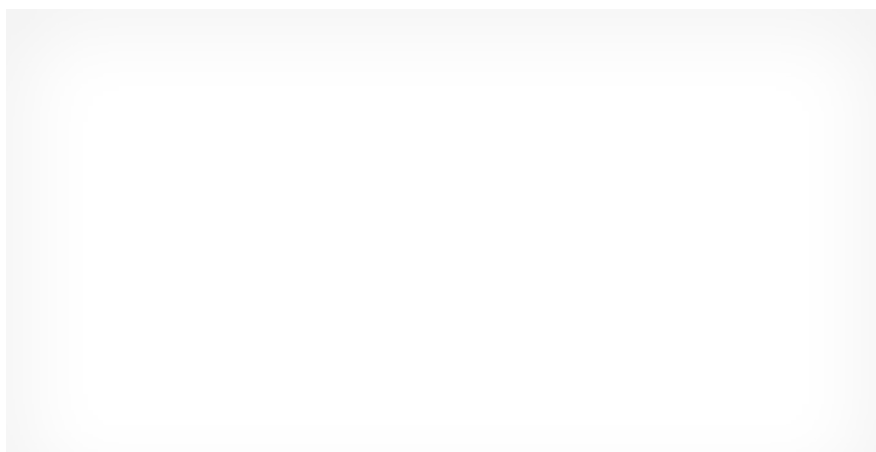
Forget the dog days of July — it's Christmas at the Queens home of chef Jon Lovitch.

Gingerbread houses line the kitchen of Lovitch's Forest Hills residence, filling an upstairs room and the basement as well. A mixer ceaselessly churns out pounds of royal icing, and Lovitch has hundreds more to go.

The creator of the Guinness-World-Record-busting GingerBread Lane works full-time on his fanciful creations all year long. There is little time for a break when there are over 2,000 houses to design, bake, frost and decorate.

Lovitch has held the title for largest gingerbread village four times, including the current record of 1,251 houses for a crowd-pleasing display at the New York Hall of Science that closed in January.

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"In early January I'm already putting houses together for the next year," said Lovitch, 40, a former executive chef. "It never really ends now."

Lovitch starts with sketches for each of the houses. He and his fiancée, Judy Seltzer, scour stores for bargain candy after Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter. They need at least 900 pounds for the tasty exhibits.

Hard candies and M&Ms work best as well as sugared gummies. Taffy is a non-starter because it melts too easily.

Lovitch said he runs dehumidifiers 24-hours-a-day in his home to help preserve the gingerbread structures throughout the year. Gobs of icing and bricks chopped from sticks of Big Red gum and other treats help keep them from crumbling.



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The royal icing, made from egg whites and sugar, is the perfect cement because it hardens and will not go rotten, he said. The icing is also used to fashion nutcrackers, Santa Claus and other festive figures.

"The workflow is now at its zenith," said Lovitch. "I'm working 80-90 hours a week on this. When we get to late September, it's easily 100 or more hours a week."

Many deadlines are looming. He must finish displays for the New York Hall of Science, as well as science museums in Florida, Maryland and Connecticut, and

install them by November.

And there's the matter of his own wedding in October.

"I'll get four days off for the wedding," he laughed.

Lovitch tries to add little details to each of the displays as a nod to the region – such as crabs for Baltimore and a nautical theme for Florida.

The villages are seasonal but he adamantly avoids any religious imagery. Instead he creates shop titles such as "T'was the Night Before Candy" and "The Twelve Days of Cheddar," a gourmet grilled cheese shop.

In addition to Seltzer's strong support, Lovitch gets inspiration from a photo hanging in his kitchen that shows one of his first exhibits being enjoyed by lines of people.

"Every year I meet people who come from all over to see this," he said. "To know I made this fun, magical, whimsical thing that people love so much — it's a great feeling."

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